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TALK ON PRISONERS

U-2 Lawyer To See Fidel



DONOVAN

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Hope for early release of more than 1,100 captives held by Fidel Castro buoyed Miami's Cuban colony today with a report that the man who arranged the release of Francis Gary Powers will go to Havana.

James B. Donovan, New York attorney who won the U-2 pilot's release from Russia, is expected to leave for Cuba early next week to confer with Castro.

The news that Donovan had made at least 10 telephone contacts with officials in Cuba and had been cleared for the visit by Raul Roa, Cuban foreign minister, and U. S. authorities raced through the Cuban colony last night.

Donovan's role in the continuing attempts to ransom the bulk of the prisoners taken in the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion, April 1961, had been kept secret for more than 10 days.

According to Cuban sources, Favio Freyre, one of three prisoners ransomed by his family, who returned with reports of horrible conditions in Castro's military prisons, met with Donovan in New York last week.

They went to Washington and conferred in secret with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Donovan got the Justice Department's okay for the project.

The calls to Havana followed. As the plans took shape, an inkling that something was afoot pervaded the Cuban colony here.

The family of one prisoner whose ransom had been set at \$100,000 by Castro was ready to pay the sum.

Then the family received a long distance call from Freyre, according to reports here, who advising them not to do anything.

The change in plans of the prisoner's family was considered highly significant in the colony here because it was on Freyre's advice, according to a Cuban source, that the family had decided to pay the ransom.

Another factor that had the exiles excited over the release prospects was that Castro, by agreeing to receive Donovan, has reopened the door to negotiations.

Some Cubans hope this may mean he is willing to reduce his ransom demands or accept food in lieu of cash.

Bolstering the report of Donovan's mission was news received by the families of some prisoners that some captives who had been moved to the Isle of Pines are being returned to Principe Prison in Havana.

Donovan, who reportedly left New York to attend the American Bar Association convention in San Francisco, may meet with executives of the Cuban Families' Committee in New York tomorrow.

The leaders of the committee, are reported to be insisting that they accompany Donovan to Havana so they will be kept informed of the proceedings.